



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG.

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Corps provides proceeds from cabin site sales to Montana Fish and Wildlife Conservation Trust

Omaha, Neb. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced it has deposited proceeds from the sale of 15 cabin sites at Fort Peck Lake, Mont. into the Montana Fish and Wildlife Conservation Trust. The proceeds, totaling \$330,500, will benefit the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge. The 1.1 million acre refuge was established in 1936 and provides habitat for diverse wildlife including elk and over 236 species of birds.

Under Title VIII of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000, also known as the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge (CMR) Enhancement Act, the Secretary of the Army, with assistance from the Secretary of the Interior, is responsible for identifying cabin sites suitable for sale to current lessees, performing necessary environmental and real estate activities to dispose of these cabin sites at fair market value and depositing sale proceeds into the Montana Fish and Wildlife Conservation Trust. The legislation requires that proceeds from the sales be used to acquire lands in and adjacent to the refuge.

According to Bill Berg, Deputy Project Leader at CMR, landowners are encouraged to contact the Fish and Wildlife Service if they have an interest in selling. "Over the years the Service has been contacted

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on numerous occasions but few funds are available for acquisition. The cabin site sales will create a unique opportunity for willing sellers and the Service to work together on land acquisition.”

BACKGROUND: Several years of collaboration between the Corps, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, Montana Department of Environmental Quality and the Fort Peck Lake Association have resulted in the successful sale of 29 lots to date. Lots average about half an acre to one acre and are removed from federal ownership and once sold, are added to the local tax roles.

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